

What is claimed is:

1. An image capturing apparatus comprising:  
a taking lens system capable of focus adjustment;  
a driver that drives the taking lens system for focus control;  
an input portion that accepts a shooting start instruction;  
a detector that detects a current position of the taking lens system; and  
a controller that determines whether the current position of the taking lens system is within an in-focus permissible range in response to the shooting start instruction, and starts shooting without driving of the taking lens system when the current position of the taking lens system is within said in-focus permissible range.
2. The image capturing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said in-focus permissible range of the taking lens system is a range where imaging point of the subject by the taking lens system is within a depth of focus.
3. The image capturing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said in-focus permissible range of the taking lens system is a range where a subject is within a depth of field.
4. The image capturing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:  
switching member that switches a plurality of submodes in a shooting mode;  
and  
wherein said controller determines whether the current position of the taking lens system is within an in-focus permissible range when a predetermined submode in said shooting mode is selected by said switching member.

5. The image capturing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein said input portion accepts a shooting preparation start instruction, and said controller performs a focus control before the acceptance of said shooting preparation start instruction.

6. The image capturing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:  
measuring portion that measures a subject distance from the image capturing apparatus to the subject; and

wherein said controller determines whether the current position of the taking lens system is within an in-focus permissible range based upon the subject distance.

7. The image capturing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising:  
setting portion that sets a subject distance from the image capturing apparatus to the subject; and

wherein said controller determines whether the current position of the taking lens system is within an in-focus permissible range based upon the subject distance set by said setting portion.

8. The image capturing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein said controller changes a value of an aperture without driving the lens system when the current position of the taking lens system is not within said in-focus permissible range so that the current position of the taking lens system is within said in-focus permissible range, and then starts shooting.

9. The image capturing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein said controller starts shooting even when the current position of the taking lens system is not within

said in-focus permissible range; and

further comprising:

edge enhancement portion that performs edge enhancement on a captured image.

10. The image capturing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein said controller starts shooting even when the current position of the taking lens system is not within said in-focus permissible range; and

further comprising:

pixel number conversion portion that changes the number of recording pixels so that the current position of the taking lens system is within said in-focus permissible range.

11. The image capturing apparatus as claimed in claim 10 wherein said pixel number conversion portion reduces the number of recording pixels.

12. The image capturing apparatus as claimed in claim 10 wherein said pixel number conversion portion sets the number of recording pixels so that the current position of the taking lens system is within said in-focus permissible range.

13. The image capturing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein said controller drives a focus lens of the taking lens until the current position of the taking lens system is within said in-focus permissible range, and then starts shooting.

14. The image capturing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein said controller drives a zoom lens of the taking lens until the current position of the taking lens system

is within said in-focus permissible range, and starts shooting.

15. The image capturing apparatus as claimed in claim 4, further comprising:  
setting portion that sets a degree of quickness in said predetermined submode;  
and

wherein said controller changes said in-focus permissible range in accordance  
with the set degree of quickness.

16. A method for capturing an image, said method comprising the steps of:  
driving a taking lens system for focus control;  
accepting a shooting start instruction;  
detecting a current position of the taking lens system;  
determining whether the current position of the taking lens system is within an  
in-focus permissible range in response to the shooting start instruction; and  
starting a shooting without driving of the taking lens system when the current  
position of the taking lens system is within said in-focus permissible range.

17. The image capturing method as claimed in claim 16 wherein said in-focus  
permissible range of the taking lens system is a range where imaging point of the subject  
by the taking lens system is within a depth of focus.

18. The image capturing method as claimed in claim 16 wherein said in-focus  
permissible range of the taking lens system is a range where a subject is within a depth  
of field.

19. The image capturing method as claimed in claim 16, further comprising the

steps of:

accepting a shooting preparation start instruction; and

controlling a focus before the acceptance of said shooting preparation start instruction.